

But the housing crisis doesn't only affect families losing their homes. An additional 40 million neighboring homeowners could see their property values drop, with 44 percent of all homeowners likely to feel the ripple effect of foreclosures from subprime loans.

And the overall impact does not end in the housing market. The ripple effects are felt throughout the economy with a reduction in economic activity and severe job loss.

Mr. Speaker, we simply cannot turn our Nation's economy around without properly addressing the housing crisis, and that is exactly what we plan to do this week. Today, House Democrats will bring a package of housing bills to the House floor that will address the current housing crisis, while also seeking to prevent the problem from getting worse. These bills are the appropriate response to a problem that is affecting our families, our communities and our overall economy. I hope it receives the bipartisan support that it deserves, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1030

WORLD AIDS ORPHANS DAY

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize World AIDS Orphans Day, which is commemorated every year on May 7.

Over 15 million children have already lost one or both of their parents to HIV and AIDS, 12 million of which live in Sub-Saharan Africa. By 2010, there could be 20 million children.

Children who have been orphaned by HIV and AIDS of course are left without food, shelter, education or protection. Three years ago, we enacted legislation that I authored with Chairman Henry Hyde to better focus and coordinate our foreign assistance programs to address the unique needs of these children. Last month, the House passed legislation named after two great men who love children, former Chairman Tom Lantos and Chairman Henry Hyde, to reauthorize and provide \$50 billion for our global HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria programs, and to allocate 10 percent of global AIDS funding to meet the needs of AIDS orphans.

Today, on World AIDS Orphans Day, I urge my colleagues in the other body to take the next step and to pass this important bill. Together we can create a brighter, safer and more secure future for the world's children.

HOUSING PACKAGE IMPORTANT TO BOOST ECONOMY AND STABILIZE MARKET

(Mr. WU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis has devastated millions of American families who have lost their homes, but the crisis doesn't end there. Experts predict that housing foreclosures could reduce overall economic activity by over \$160 billion this year thanks to sharp declines in real estate, the construction industry, and in consumer spending.

The slump in the real estate market is hurting manufacturers, construction firms and other businesses that have been forced to lay off thousands of workers. Ending the foreclosure crisis is vital to the American economy, our economic recovery, and to Americans who are hurting. And that is why it is so important that this Congress pass the bipartisan housing package that we are presenting this week. It reported out of the Financial Services Committee by both Republicans and Democrats and sent to this floor for our consideration.

Mr. Speaker, serious problems with subprime mortgages have pushed the housing market into its worst slump in decades, weakening the economy and making American families less secure. The package of bills we are presenting today will help stabilize the housing industry and give the American economy the boost it so sorely needs. And I urge every Member of the House to support these much-needed bills.

CALENDAR WEDNESDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Today is the day of Calendar Wednesday. The Clerk will call the roll of committees. The Clerk called the committees.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. SESSIONS (during the call). Mr. Speaker, I have a point of parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. SESSIONS. I understand that this procedure that we are going through is known as Calendar Wednesday.

Is it correct that any bill reported by a committee and placed on the Union or House Calendar could have been called up by the chairman as the committee name was read?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Clause 2(b) of rule XIII is sufficient authority for the chairman of the committee to call up from the Calendar a non-privileged bill on Calendar Wednesday.

Mr. SESSIONS. Further point of parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. SESSIONS. Does the jurisdiction of the Energy and Commerce Committee, as provided under clause 1 of rule X of the rules of the House of Representatives, include exploration, production, storage, supply, marketing, pricing and regulation of energy resources, including all fossil fuels, which includes legislation to lower the price of gasoline which has increased to over \$3.60 a gallon under Speaker PELOSI's watch?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair believes that the gentleman correctly stated the rule up to the point where he embarked on commentary.

Mr. SESSIONS. I have a further point of parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. SESSIONS. H.R. 3236, introduced by Congressman BOUCHER of Virginia, to promote energy efficiency improvements in buildings and appliances was reported by the Energy and Commerce Committee on August 3, 2007, and placed on the Union Calendar.

Would it be possible for Mr. DINGELL, the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, to call up this bill under his committee's jurisdiction to help the Speaker to implement her secret plan to reduce gas prices by diverting less of America's energy supply to buildings and appliances, or for any other membership of the Democrat majority to help their leadership to call up the bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will respond to the Member's parliamentary inquiry but not his political commentary and repeat that clause 2(b) of rule XIII is sufficient authority for the chairman of the committee to call up from the Calendar a non-privileged bill on Calendar Wednesday.

Mr. SESSIONS. Further point of parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. SESSIONS. Is it in order for any Member of the majority to call up H.R. 3239, also introduced by Mr. BOUCHER of Virginia and also available on the Union Calendar, to promote advancing plug-in hybrid vehicles and vehicle components through loan guarantees and grants, and if this would help the Speaker to implement her secret plan by reducing the demand for gasoline and bringing down the prices that have skyrocketed under this Democrat leadership?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Only the chairman or another member of the committee acting by its express direction may call up a bill.

Mr. SESSIONS. Final point of parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. SESSIONS. Under the rules of Calendar Wednesday, is it in order for any Member of this body, including Speaker PELOSI, to call up H. Res. 1135, legislation drafted by Congressman DEAN HELLER of Nevada, which would call on Speaker PELOSI to reveal her secret commonsense plan to bring down gas prices since it's obviously not contained in the "no energy" energy bill passed by the Congress last December?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. No. To be considered under the Calendar Wednesday rule, a bill must be on the Calendar, be non-privileged, and be called up either by the committee